

Remarks

This Preliminary Amendment cancels, without prejudice, claims 1 and 2 in the underlying PCT application, and adds new claims 3 and 4. The new claims, inter alia, conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

The above amendments to the specification and the abstract conform the specification and the abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules, and do not introduce new matter into the application.

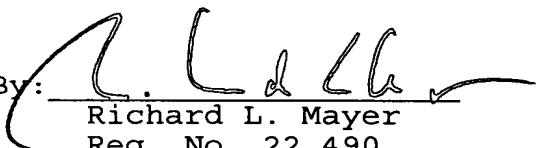
The underlying PCT application PCT/EP99/00029 includes an International Search Report, dated May 21, 1999. An English translation of the Search Report is provided herewith.

The underlying PCT application also includes an International Preliminary Examination Report ("IPER"). An English translation of the IPER is included herewith.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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